

Musgrave's resource bills moving through committee

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Rocky Mountain National Park and Sand Creek Massacre bills approved.

Washington, DC: Today, two bills introduced by Congresswoman Marilyn Musgrave (CO-04) were approved in the House Committee on Resources, setting the stage for votes by the whole House of Representatives later this year. The Rocky Mountain Boundary Adjustment Act, H.R. 774, and the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site Trust Act, H.R. 481, were both passed through committee.

"I am encouraged these bills are moving forward in the legislative process, they are important measures for our state's resources," said Musgrave. "Rocky Mountain National Park is a crown jewel of the National Park system, and Sand Creek serves as a poignant site in Colorado's early history. I will continue working for their passage."

H.R. 774 - Rocky Mountain National Park Boundary Adjustment Act of 2005 was ordered favorably reported to the House by unanimous consent. This bill would convey three strategic pieces of land to the Park System from MacGregor Ranch, a historic working cattle ranch that is located within the boundary of the park. The new parcels of land would be used to build a new parking lot and road to offer improved access for the public, while protecting the historic integrity of the ranch. Musgrave's legislation is a companion bill to Colorado Senator Wayne Allard's.

In December, 2004, Musgrave toured Rocky Mountain National Park and discussed issues regarding park management and preservation with Superintendent Vaughn Baker, including the need for this legislation.

One of the increasingly popular spots within the National Park is the Twin Owls Trailhead, which is now only accessible by traversing a one-lane dirt access road across the

MacGregor Ranch. This heavy traffic effects the pristine, historic nature of the homestead. Musgrave's bill protects the historic, 132-year-old MacGregor Ranch homestead near the Twin Owls Trailhead.

Rocky Mountain National Park ranks in the top five most visited parks in America, and received nearly 50,000 more visitors last year than did the renowned Yellowstone National Park.

H.R. 481 - Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site Trust Act of 2005 was ordered favorably to the House by unanimous consent as well. Specifically, this legislation furthers the creation of the National Historic Site by establishing the National Park Service as the managers of 1,400 acres of land known as "Dawson's Creek", which will be given to the Cheyenne and Arapahoe tribes in a trust by the federal government. Musgrave's legislation is a companion bill to Colorado Senator Wayne Allard's.

Earlier this year, the Subcommittee on National Parks held a hearing on Musgrave's Sand Creek Massacre bill.

This bill is not only important to the Cheyenne and Arapaho Indian tribes, the citizens of the Fourth District of Colorado and the entire State, but it is also important to help secure a permanent reminder in America of the tragic event that forever altered the course of Western frontier history.

On November 29, 1864, 700 Colorado Volunteers commanded by Colonel John Chivington attacked a village of Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians who were camped along Big Sandy Creek in what is now Kiowa County, Colorado. More than 150 Indian people were killed in the attack, the majority of who were woman and children. This event today is known as the Sand Creek Massacre.